

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



October 5, 1999

ALL-COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I- 72-99

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: VERIFICATION OF FOOD STAMP AND  
CalWORKs PARTICIPATION FOR  
FREE SCHOOL MEALS.

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order or Settlement Agreement
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

This letter provides information and requests your cooperation in regard to expanding the implementation of direct certification for free school meals through your local Food Stamp and CalWORKs Program offices. Currently, only twenty-three percent of California school districts work directly with their local Food Stamp or CalWORKs Program offices to certify eligible children for free school meals. When properly implemented, direct certification has resulted in an impressive increase in the number of children participating in free school meal programs. These meals provide essential supplemental nutrition to children in households receiving assistance.

County welfare departments (CWDs) can assist in increasing the number of direct certifications in California by working actively with school districts and county offices of education to establish the mechanisms and systems for information-sharing needed to automatically certify children for free school meals. For example, if you designate a staff person to be a contact for direct certification and if you establish a protocol for annual data matching to identify eligible school children, you'll be able to respond immediately when a school district contacts you.

In accordance with regulations at MPP 63-201.3 (Food Stamps) and MPP 19-004.61 (CalWORKs), CWDs are authorized to release Food Stamp and CalWORKs information to school districts in order to facilitate the direct certification of eligible children for free school meals that are provided under the National School Lunch Act.

You may have already received or you will be receiving a letter from the California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA), co-signed by Marilyn Briggs of the California Department of Education alerting you to the complementary efforts of State and local agencies to increase participation in direct certification. That letter clarifies information identifying school districts in your county and a sample letter, mailing labels and fact sheets for you

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use in contacting your school districts. CFPA will also respond to your requests for technical support.

Your cooperation in this matter is essential and will be appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ellen O'Connor, Food Stamp Bureau, at 916/653-5420 and Elizabeth Allred, CalWORKs Bureau at 916/657-3350.

Sincerely,

***Original document signed by  
Charr Lee Metsker on 10-5-99***

CHARR LEE METSKER, Chief  
Employment and Eligibility Branch